

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT
'Aspects of Socratic Rationality'

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The aim of my dissertation research is to provide an account of Socratic rationality and to consider how aspects of that account might bear upon several controversial aspects of Socratic philosophy.

Generally speaking, the dissertation will have two major divisions. The nature of my work in the first division will be more exploratory and interpretive as I seek to carve out what Socrates takes rationality to be in the early-middle dialogues of Plato. Among other things, my investigation in this first division will involve a careful consideration of the Socratic elenchus, the nature of Socratic definitions, the educational program of the Republic, Socratic self-knowledge, etc. Once a systematic account of Socratic rationality has been sufficiently elucidated (if one exists at all), my aim in the second division of the dissertation will be to apply aspects of that account to several controversial aspects of Socratic philosophy—most notably, the worry that Socrates' allegiance to the *daimonion* (or 'divine sign') and his frequent use of myth are irrational given his claim to be the kind of person that is persuaded by reason and rational argument alone.

Although I am only in the initial stages of my research, I have a hunch that Socrates' notion of rationality will, in the end, turn out to be something very different than what most modern conceptions of rationality amount to. As such, providing an account of Socratic rationality may greatly affect the way in which certain controversies in Socratic philosophy get resolved.